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246 Race St.

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Caput March 3<sup>d</sup> 1828

Inaugural Dissertation

on

Acute Hepatitis

for

The degree of Doctor of Medicine

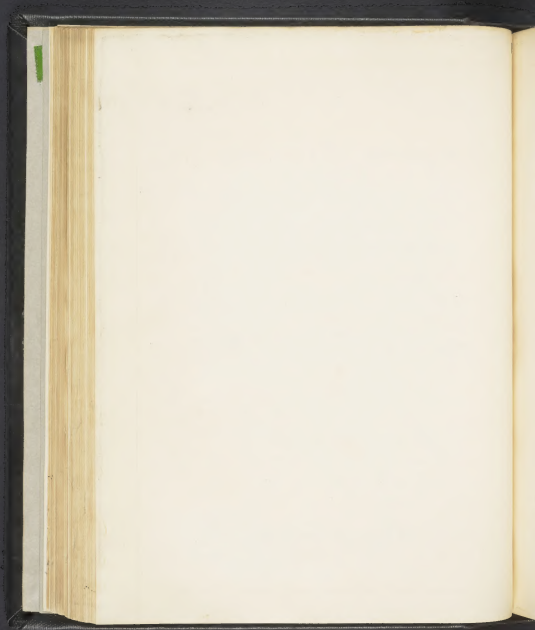
by

Henry Unstead

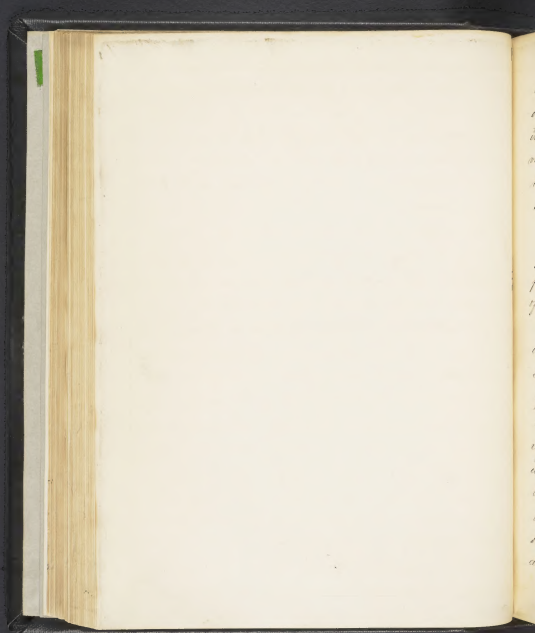
of

Pennsylvania

January 15<sup>th</sup> 1828



*A Dissertation  
on  
Acute Hepatitis*



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The liver being one of the most important organs in the animal machine, the functions it performs in the economy of, together with the variety and delicacy of structure, render it on many occasions the seat of dangerous and extensive diseases.

This organ like most parts of the human fabric is liable to inflammation under two forms, the acute and chronic. It is to the former of which I shall confine my remarks.

Symptoms—Acute hepatitis is ushered in with the ordinary phenomena of pyrexia as chillings or rigors succeeded by flushes of heat, fever and increased activity of the circulation. There is also pain in the right hypochondriac region either obtuse, or acute and lancinating with a sense of weight and fulness and an increase of the pain by pressure. The pain generally extends to the right shoulder-blade and is sometimes felt more acutely, than in the diseased viscus itself. All the pain and uneasi-

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ness is sometimes felt on the opposite side, owing  
we are taught to the left lobe of the liver being  
affected. this takes place more frequently in women  
than men.

The lungs generally become affected in this  
disease as is indicated by a short dry cough  
and difficulty of respiration.

The alimentary canal becomes very early implicated  
which is manifested by nausea and sickness with  
vomiting of bilious matter. The bowels are generally  
inactive and costive and the alvine evacuations  
are small in quantity and clay coloured show-  
ing a deficiency of biliary secretions; or they are  
harassed with diarrhoea and bilious discharges.

Commonly from the commencement of the  
complaint the fever is high, with a dry hot  
skin, foul tongue, head-ach, great thirst, watch-  
fulness, and occasional delirium. The eyes and  
skin are of a yellow tinge, the urine deposits a  
copious lateritious sediment is of a saffron colour  
and small in quantity.

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The liver now becomes swollen and tender so that the patient cannot lie easy on either side but he suffers less pain and uneasiness when he lies on the side affected.

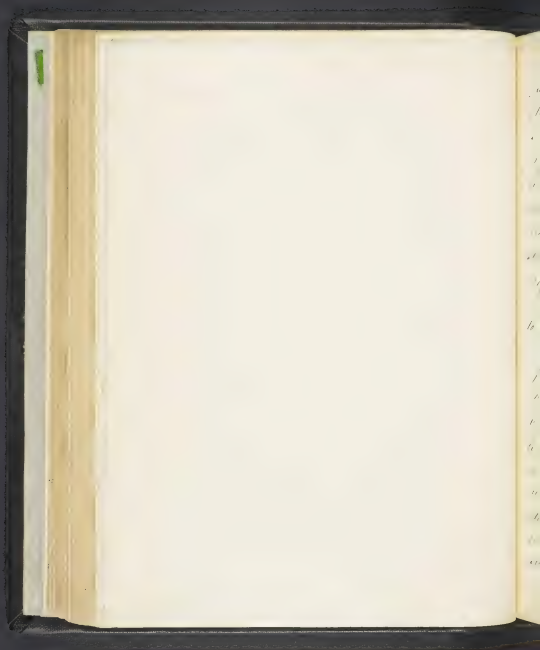
These are the ordinary features of the disease as they are presented in this country. But the disease is varied by climate and situation and is sometimes marked with irregular and anomalous symptoms. Between the tropics it is more rapid in its course running on to suppuration without any premonition or usual symptoms denoting such a termination. The disease in this case is principally congestive with obscure inflammation and is frequently ushered in, in the shape of cholera morbus or bilious discharges downward.

Cases sometimes occur in which there is no pain or uneasiness in the affected part, no sallowness of the skin and little or no disturbance in the vascular system. At other times it puts on the form of pulmonary inflammation or it extends itself on the head inducing agonizing pain, or on the

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kidney or ammonia or urea, used to be  
used about a month before death.

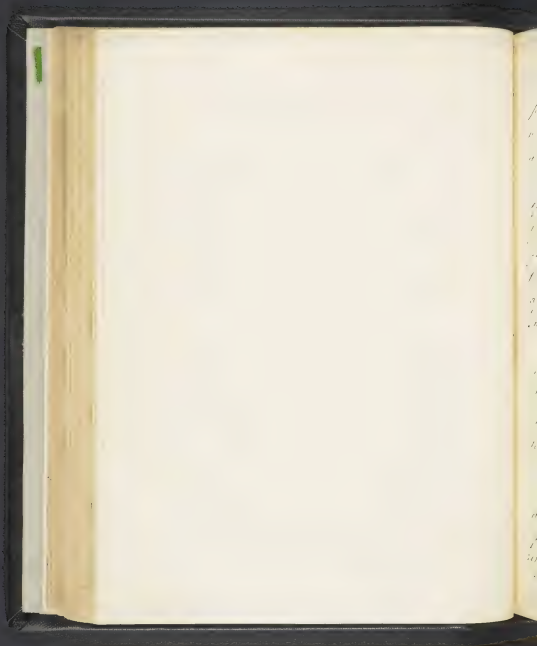
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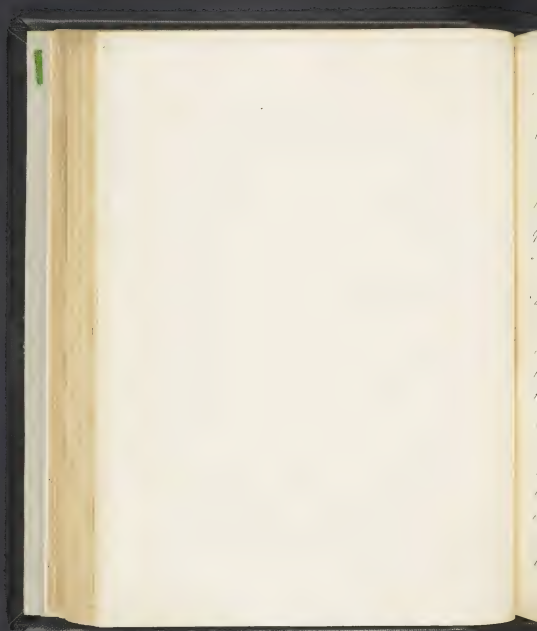
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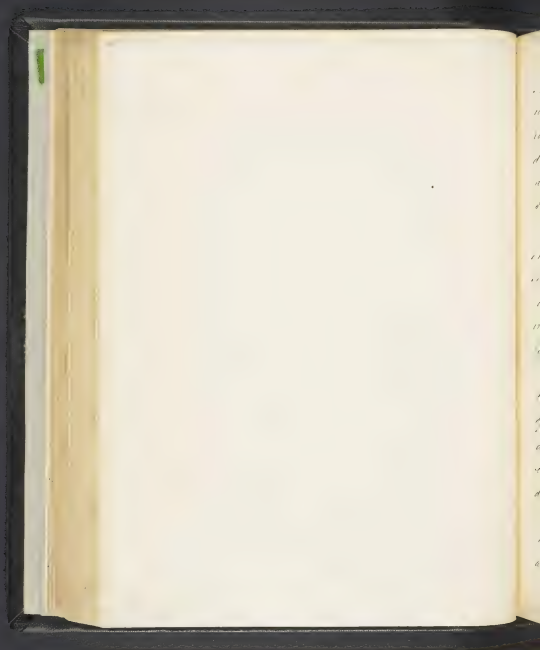










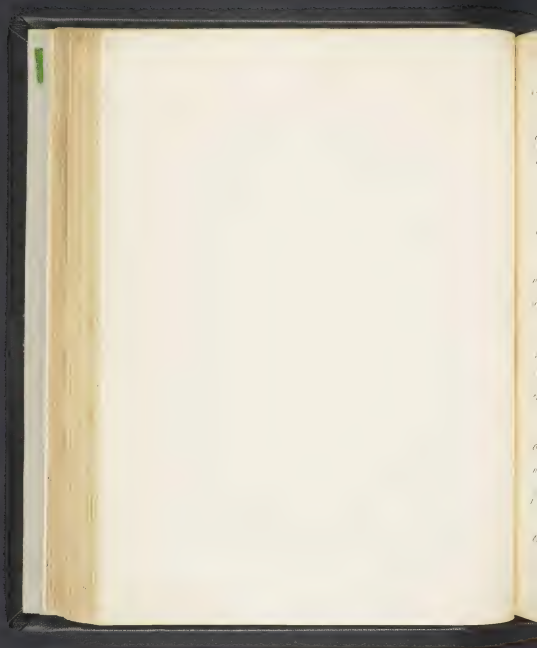


status not intense more of in either of the ways above mentioned an approaching convalescence may be known by a gradual subsidence of fever and pain, a change of complexion, a return of strength, a tranquil state of the stomach, and a general amelioration of condition.

Treatment.— It is an important and vascular organ being in a highly congested condition requires, for its relief, prompt and decisive measures. All the means for removing inflammation should be resorted to in strict accordance with the antiphlogistic treatment.

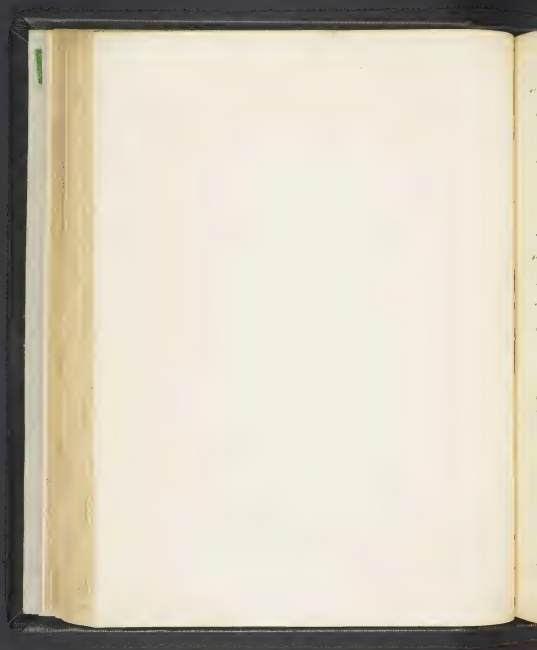
The lancet here is freely used being among other remedies the most effectual. Twenty ounces of blood should be drawn says Dr. Chapman and repeated daily if necessary; in the more vehement forms less than this will make no decided and salutary impression on the case.

After general bleeding proportioning the quantity which has been drawn to the age and temperament of the patient and the



severity of the case local bleeding by cups and  
leeches and counter irritants by blister may with  
equal advantage be used. The leeches are usually  
applied over the part affected, but it is insisted  
on by some writers that they prove more ef-  
ficacious when applied around the vessel of  
the anus &c. as the treatment is improved  
by the advantage derived from the increased  
flow of blood to the parts which is increased  
by the action of the leeches and the blood  
is retained a longer time in the  
veins.

In connection with the treatment of  
anæsthesia the remedies of importance must  
not be forgotten. The first is a state of in-  
flammation has the vessels expanded or  
more impeded and the circulation com-  
plicated. "Unguentum serpentum" is applied to  
the duct of the vessel and it is used



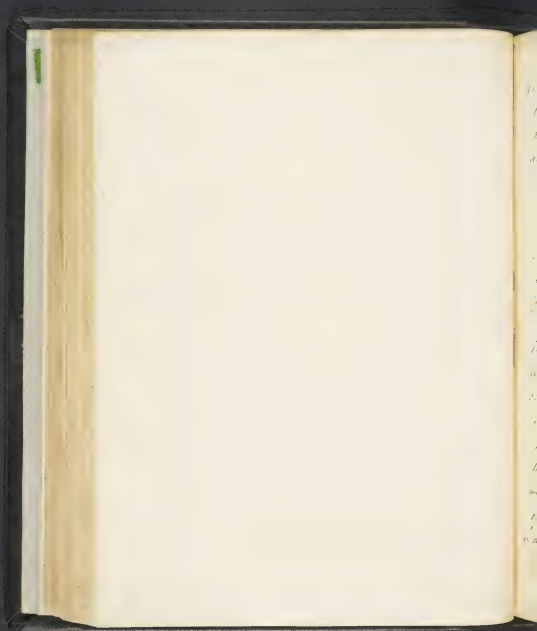


excitations which are added up to the chronic  
inflammatory state of the organ as well as  
the existence of a chronic disease of the  
system.

Success must be made an impression on the  
mind and here Imperial. Colic from its  
specific action on the hepatic apparatus should  
be prescribed. It is given in large doses at  
night and purged off next morning with  
some mild purgative as Epsom salts or calomel  
id. magna.

Should the disease from extraordinary  
obstinacy or defective practice prove inveterate  
it is run on to the chronic stage then a  
prolonged course can only be trusted.

In conducting the patient through a pro-  
longed course in this disease it will be proper  
to introduce the mercury gradually and in  
order to mitigate pain and subdue febrile  
action which will occasionally arise we shall  
have to recur in some instances to ressection

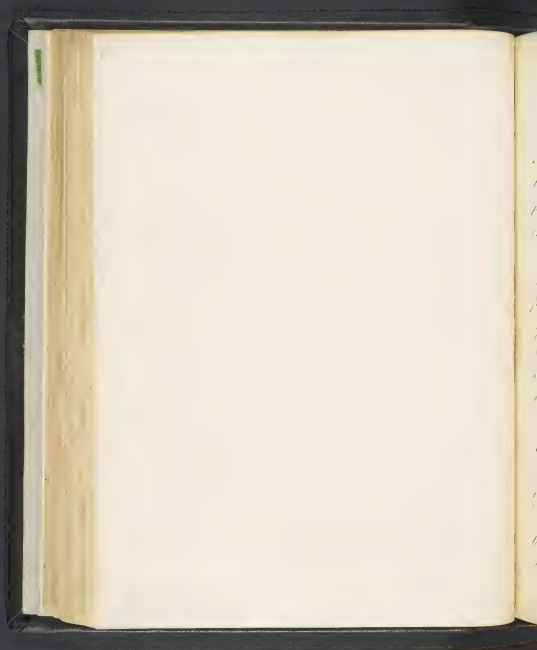


and diet. — Concurring in the general treatment the diet should be of the lightest and least nourishing kind, consisting of gruels, lapocca arrow root and other mild mucinaceous articles.

In no account whatever should animal food be permitted either in diet or otherwise.

The disease consists of the secretion of pus and impregnated with acids according with heating and stimulating causes, with the free admission of air in the abscess.

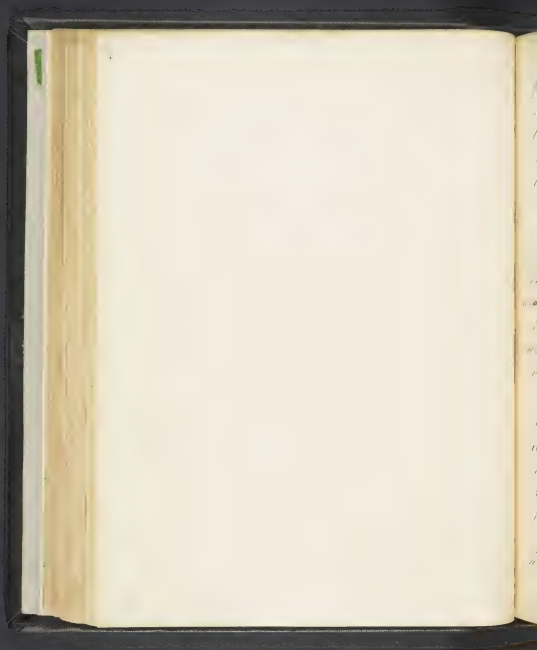
Even in the treatment pursued in acute hepatitis and is, however resorted to and vigorously used will generally arrest the inflammation. But it occasionally happens that no gain of treatment will succeed and the disease is degenerated into an abscess terminates in suppuration. When this occurs it is about to take place we have as preliminary symptoms an increase of pain with access of weight and febrile and inactive full pulse. The process of suppuration becomes complete when a collection of pus is formed in



but not thinking accompanied with intense  
exacerbation of fever, hectic, hectic and  
night sweats. The vomiting is symptoms of  
disturbance not with the stomach cavity to  
bring the most powerful stimulants to ap-  
plied to the stomach is a loss of motion in the  
extremities which are in a degree paralyzed.

The food may be discharged in various  
ways. If the food is found toward the dia-  
phragm the vomit comes out after symptoms  
of peritonitis. If the food is  
ejected into the cavity of the chest the food may  
be often expectorated and a cure thus effected  
if the patient will die from exsiccation.

If the portion of the stomach which has really  
been the stomach point toward the chest  
the vomit is vomit vomit vomit vomit  
the vomit vomit into it the patient may be  
exhausted by vomiting. The doctor may  
take place into the abdomen and the patient  
is vomit vomit vomit vomit vomit



peritoneal inflammation, or the abscess may burst into the intestines or travel through the hepatic ducts into the duodenum and the patient recover. In either of the last two cases the pus is discharged by stool.

The abscess frequently points externally and the matter is either discharged through the skin spontaneously or evacuated by the surgeon. When however an abscess points externally and becomes soft, with evident formation of pus it should be evacuated. Ulcers are often affected when this operation is timely, resorted to, but rarely when it is left to break spontaneously.

While the abscess is discharging its contents usually much irritation and considerable debility succeed. To quiet irritation, opiates are proper and the system is to be supported by mild nutritious articles of food and by tonics, especially the nitro-muriatic acid which often proves of the greatest utility when used in the form of a bath.





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Die Essay

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